KENYA NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Labour, Employment and Social Protection

KAZI YA TAIFA

The National Labour and Social Protection Vision

WORKING DOCUMENT — IN PROGRESS. Architecture and philosophy complete. Sections marked [FORTHCOMING] are pending completion.

A twenty-year programme to connect Kenya's young majority to productive, dignified work through a national interest and aptitude matching system, structured pathways into every national programme corps and private sector, labour law designed for development rather than compliance, and a Social Protection Floor that ensures no Kenyan falls below a defined minimum regardless of economic fortune.

Kenya National Development Programme | Labour and Employment Directorate | Year One

Preamble

Kenya's median age is approximately 20 years. This single fact defines the primary design problem of the national labour programme — and it is a problem of extraordinary opportunity rather than extraordinary challenge. Kenya is not managing the decline of a mature industrial workforce. It is not managing the transition from one industrial era to another. Kenya is onboarding a population: a young, trainable, curious, not-yet-committed population of 800,000 new labour market entrants per year who are ready to be guided into productive economic life if the system exists to guide them.

The system does not yet exist. What exists is a labour market that most young Kenyans navigate without information, without guidance, and without any institutional connection between their interests and aptitudes and the enormous range of productive economic roles the national programme is creating. A 19-year-old in Kakamega who would be an excellent railway signalling technician does not know that role exists. KRCC does not know she exists. Nobody connects them. This is the matching problem, and it is the primary design problem of this programme.

Most labour law is written to protect existing arrangements in mature industrial economies. Kenya at median age 20 needs forward-looking labour architecture. The law in this document is designed for development, not for compliance and repatriation of existing patterns. It makes formal employment the easy path and informality the costly one. It builds the Social Protection Floor not as charity but as economic stabilisation infrastructure — the floor that allows young people to take productive risks, to train, to move, to try.

The Social Protection Floor — The Destination

By Year Twenty, every Kenyan has access to a defined Social Protection Floor regardless of employment status: access to healthcare through NHIF reform; income security for children through school feeding and ECD; income security for working-age adults in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity, and disability; and income security for older persons through NSSF reform.

This is not a welfare state. It is a floor, not a ceiling. It is the guarantee that no Kenyan's life is destroyed by a single economic misfortune — a job loss, an injury, an illness — because the downside is bounded. A population with a bounded downside takes more productive risks, invests more in training, and participates more fully in the economy. The Social Protection Floor is an investment in national productivity, not a cost to it.

SECTION ONE

The Doctrine — Labour Law as Development Infrastructure

1.1 The Philosophy

Most labour law in Kenya has two origins. The colonial origin: regulations designed to manage an African workforce for colonial production, defining the worker as a unit of production rather than a rights-bearing person. The post-independence formalist origin: copying ILO conventions and European labour codes designed for industrialised economies with mature industrial relations, applying them to a

context where they do not fit, and being surprised when compliance is low. The result is a body of law that most employers and most workers relate to primarily as an obstacle — something to be navigated, minimised, or evaded.

Kazi ya Taifa starts from a different question. Not how do we regulate the employment relationship but how do we connect 800,000 people per year to productive, dignified, remunerative work, and how do we ensure that when they find it the terms are fair and the floor is real? The law is an enabling instrument. Simplification, matching, portable protection, and the investment in guidance are the primary design logic. Enforcement is downstream of enabling — you enforce a system people want to participate in.

The Formality Inversion
Currently in Kenya, registering a worker formally costs more, creates more employer liability, and involves more administrative burden than paying someone cash. Formality is the hard path. Informality is the easy path.
The programme inverts this. A simplified one-day registration, a single-page contract in Swahili, a PAYE incentive for newly formalised workers, and NSSF contributions that can be made by the day for casual workers — these make formality easier than informality.
The enforcement complement: KRCC and KSBC contracts above Ksh 1 million require all workers formally registered. Informal payment for formally registered work is wage theft, prosecuted accordingly. The carrot comes first. The stick is real but secondary.

1.2 The National Programme Pathways — Every Corps, Every Sector

The national programme creates structured employment pathways across every sector. Every corps established under every programme document is a labour market pathway with defined entry points, training routes, progression ladders, and employment terms. The labour document is the institutional home for all of them. This table has been updated to reflect the full corps architecture across all programme documents.

Corps / Pathway	Programme Document	Entry and Progression
Kenya Railway Corps — Corridor Battalions, Maintenance	KRC Corps Act, Atlas, Financing Architecture, Land	Track formation worker (Level 3). Track layer/welder (Level 3). Signalling technician (Level 4). Bridge construction worker (Level 4). Locomotive operator (Level 5). Station manager (Level 5). Freight logistics

Corps / Pathway	Programme Document	Entry and Progression
Division, Manufacturing Wing, Training Command	Framework	coordinator (Level 5). Civil engineer (Level 6–7). Corridor Battalion Commander (Level 8). Training Command instructor (Level 5–7). Manufacturing Wing assembly line operator (Level 3–4). 60% of each Corridor Battalion recruited from corridor-adjacent counties — the community whose land the track crosses builds it and maintains it. Shift premium 25% for night operations. Enhanced pension. 240,000 at peak construction; 15,000–20,000 permanent.
Settlement Maintenance Corps — Ward Maintenance Units (Street, Utilities, Waste/Cleaning, Green, River teams)	Kenya National Settlement Vision, Kenya National Urban Settlement	Street maintenance operative (Level 3). Drainage and utilities technician (Level 3). Waste collection and circular economy operative (Level 3). Green spaces and riparian buffer maintenance worker (Level 3). Settlement Maintenance Academy graduate (6-month foundation programme). Ward Maintenance Unit supervisor (Level 4). County Corps Commander (Level 6). Mechanical fleet operator: electric sweeper truck, hoover truck, TBM support equipment (Level 4). 40,000–60,000 permanent. Locally recruited, locally deployed, living in the community they serve. The broken street is fixed in 72 hours — the accountability standard that makes this corps visible.
Kenya Water Construction and Maintenance Corps — 5 battalions, Maintenance Corps, Hydrological Intelligence Unit	Kenya National Water Vision — Maji ni Uhai	Borehole driller (Level 3). Sand dam construction worker (Level 3). Irrigation channel engineer (Level 4). Water treatment plant operator (Level 4). Pipeline engineer (Level 5). Hydrological monitoring technician (Level 4). Community Engineer — trained at Corps Academy, 3-year programme covering dam safety, borehole operation, water quality testing, Trust governance; permanently employed by Community Water Trust, living locally (Level 5). 5,000–8,000 Corps staff; 2,000–3,000 Community Engineers.
Kenya National Ambulance Corps — 2,650-vehicle fleet, national command,	KNAC Corps Act	Community first responder to Clan Health Warden (intermediate standard, clan-selected, satellite device, prior learning credit toward full CHP). Community Health Paramedic: mother-tongue speaker, ward-recruited, motorcycle deployment, daily household

Corps / Pathway	Programme Document	Entry and Progression
county formations, air wing		surveillance rounds, emergency first-on-scene (KNQF Level 4–5). Paramedic: advanced airway management, IV access, drug administration, 12-lead ECG, obstetric emergency, trauma (Level 5). Flight paramedic (Level 6). Dispatcher at sub-county, county, and National Emergency Operations Centre levels. Fleet maintenance engineer. Air wing ground crew. 25,000 Corps staff at establishment plus 4,400 CHPs and 16,000 Clan Health Wardens. Post-traumatic stress monitoring mandatory. Motto: Tiba Mapema. Usalama Daima.
KLIC — Kenya Land and Irrigation Corporation (irrigation and land reclamation)	Shamba la Taifa, Chuo Kuu ya Taifa	Irrigation technician — pipe laying, pump operation and maintenance, drip and sprinkler systems (Level 3–4, 18-month KLIC Academy). Land preparation operator — clearing, levelling, earthmoving equipment on agricultural sites (Level 3–4, 18-month). Tractor and machinery operator (Level 3, 12-month). Soil technician — field sampling, laboratory analysis, fertiliser calculations (Level 4, 12-month). Farm supervisor — irrigation scheduling, crop scouting, harvest coordination (Level 5, 18-month). KLIC-University Research Partnership: university agricultural faculty operates live schemes on KLIC concessions; students learn on commercial farms. 'Departure celebrated, not lamented.'
KAERS — Kenya Agricultural Extension and Research Service (ward-level extension officers)	Shamba la Taifa, Chuo Kuu ya Taifa	Ward Extension Officer: minimum Diploma in Agriculture, KAERS Level 1 Certification (core agronomy, cooperative interface, digital tools, 3 months), Level 2 specialist track (crops/livestock/fisheries/horticulture, 3 months further), Level 3 Master Extension Officer (by portfolio assessment). Employed and paid by county. Trained and certified by KAERS. Based permanently at ward cooperative facility. 1 per ward = approximately 1,450 positions nationally.
KISC / KFPEC — industrial steel and food processing	Viwanda ya Taifa	KISC: plant operator (Level 3–4), metallurgical technician (Level 4–5), production engineer (Level 6–7). Blast furnace, BOF, continuous casting, rolling mill

Corps / Pathway	Programme Document	Entry and Progression
equipment manufacturing		— all require KNQF-certified trades. KFPEC: fabrication welder (Level 3–4), mechanical engineer (Level 5–6), BIM design technician (Level 4). KSBC Academy steelworker and electrician tracks are the primary feeder pipeline. From Year 7: 3,000–5,000 permanent KISC positions at Dongo Kundu.
KRCC — Roads and Civil Infrastructure	Ujenzi na Miundombinu, all infrastructure	KNQF Level 3 apprenticeship (field surveyor, plant operator, road construction). Level 4 site supervisor. Level 5 project manager. Level 6 civil engineer. Permanent commercial employment. County-based deployment. KRCC Academy: 200 graduates + 500 trades apprentices/year.
KSBC — Building and Construction	Ujenzi na Miundombinu, Nyumba ya Taifa	Tier 3 registered fundi through to Tier 1 main contractor. HPC manufacturing operative to production manager. Building Standards Institute inspector (Level 5). KNQF Level 3–6.
Kenya Land and Irrigation Corporation (KLIC) — land reclamation and irrigation contracting	Shamba la Taifa + Chuo Kuu ya Taifa	Irrigation technician (KNQF Level 3–4). Land preparation operator (Level 3–4 — KLIC equipment fleet). Tractor and machinery operator (Level 3). Soil technician (Level 4 — soil sampling, laboratory analysis, fertiliser recommendation). Farm supervisor (Level 4–5 — large-scale operation management, irrigation scheduling, crop scouting). KLIC Academy entry route. Corporate Academy Ladder: KLIC HND (Level 5) validated by Egerton University → BSc Agriculture + KLIC qualification (Level 6). The practitioner-instructor model: a KLIC soil scientist who has reclaimed 10,000 ASAL hectares teaches soil reclamation. University agricultural faculties operate live commercial farms on KLIC-prepared land — the scheme is the laboratory.
Kenya Agricultural Extension and Research Service (KAERS)	Shamba la Taifa	Ward Extension Officer — minimum Diploma in Agriculture, KAERS Level 1 Certification within 12 months (3-month programme covering core agronomy, soil science, cooperative interface, digital tools), three certification levels total. Permanently based at Ward Cooperative Facility. County-employed, nationally certified. Annual 5-day professional development at regional KAERS

Corps / Pathway	Programme Document	Entry and Progression
		demonstration farm. Annual farmer satisfaction survey accountability. Extension officer maintains ward farm notebook — the aggregate becomes Kenya's most granular agricultural production dataset feeding back to KAERS for variety evaluation.
Kenya Integrated Steel Corporation (KISC) + Kenya Food Processing Equipment Corporation (KFPEC)	Viwanda ya Taifa	Blast furnace operator (Level 3–4). Basic oxygen furnace operator (Level 4). Continuous casting operator (Level 4). Rolling mill operator (Level 4). Equipment maintenance engineer (Level 5–6). Metallurgical engineer (Level 6–8). Steel process technologist (Level 6). KFPEC fabrication operative (Level 3–4 — canning lines, cold room panels, irrigation equipment using KISC flat products). KISC employs approximately 8,000–12,000 at Phase 1 full operation. KFPEC employs 2,000–4,000. The EAF bridge expansion at existing Devki/Tononoka/Insteel facilities creates an additional 3,000–5,000 skilled positions before the integrated mill is operational.
Kenya Agricultural Corps	Shamba la Taifa	Field extension officer (Level 4). Soil scientist (Level 5). Irrigation manager (Level 5). Cooperative development officer (Level 5). Post-harvest processing specialist (Level 4).
Kenya Digital Corps	Teknolojia ya Taifa	Network installation technician (Level 3). Government digital services officer (Level 4). ArdhiSasa field support. CRC digital terminal maintenance. Cybersecurity analyst (Level 5–6). KECA data management officer (Level 5 — new pathway from Energy Sovereign Protection Act).
Kenya Forest and Conservation Corps	Mazingira ya Taifa	Community conservation officer (Level 3). Bamboo plantation manager (Level 4). Wildlife monitoring technician (Level 4). Mau and Aberdares restoration field teams. Carbon verification field officer (Level 4).
Kenya Cultural and Heritage Corps	Utamaduni wa Taifa	Community mapping officer (Level 3). Heritage site educator (Level 4). NMK field curator (Level 5). KATS touring production support. Company manager (Level 5).
Kenya Sports Development	Utamaduni wa Taifa	CRC programme officer (Level 4). Sports talent identification officer (Level 4). Coaching

Corps / Pathway	Programme Document	Entry and Progression
Corps		assistant (Level 4). Sports Institute support staff. Sports science research associate (Level 6).
Private Manufacturing	Viwanda ya Taifa	Dongo Kundu SEZ operative through to production manager. Rivatex textile operative to supervisor. Agro-processing food technologist. Quality control inspector. Export compliance officer.
Private Construction	Nyumba ya Taifa	Registered fundi (Tier 3) to main contractor (Tier 1). Quantity surveyor. Architect. Structural engineer.
Tourism and Hospitality	Utalii wa Taifa	Guide (Level 4). Lodge manager (Level 5). Conservation tourism specialist (Level 5). Creative industries production (music, film, fashion).
Entrepreneurship	All programmes	Cooperative founder. SACCO officer. Small business operator. ADBK loan client. Not a residual pathway — an active first-choice route for those with entrepreneurial aptitude identified by NIAS.

SECTION TWO

The National Interest and Aptitude System

2.1 The Matching Problem

The matching problem is this: 800,000 new labour market entrants per year, each with interests, aptitudes, and potential that are largely unknown to themselves and entirely unknown to the institutions that could employ them. The national programme creates structured pathways in every sector. But the pathway only produces an outcome if the right person finds it. Currently almost nobody finds it through design. They find it through accident, family connection, or desperate availability.

The National Interest and Aptitude System is the institutional answer to the matching problem. It is not a test. It is not a career aptitude quiz that assigns a job title. It is a conversation that begins when a person is ready — which is typically

around the end of secondary school but can be at any age — and that stays with that person as they develop, gain experience, and discover what they actually like.

2.2 The Four Layers

Layer	Design and Function
Layer One — Preference Exploration	The first interaction is genuinely exploratory. Not 'what do you want to be?' — that produces socially conditioned answers. Instead: what do you enjoy doing? When do you lose track of time? Do you prefer working with your hands, with people, with information, with systems? Do you like working outdoors or indoors, alone or in teams, with routines or with variety? Are you drawn to things that move — vehicles, machinery, water, animals — or to things that are built and stay — structures, systems, plans, ideas? Delivered in Swahili. 45 minutes. Accessible on any phone or CRC digital terminal. Available in schools, CRCs, TVET colleges, cooperative hub centres, and railway station waiting rooms. No right answer. No wrong answer. The system explains this explicitly.
Layer Two — Data-Informed Guidance	The system processes responses against a continuously updated national labour market database: which skills are in demand, where, at what pay levels, with what training pathways and what typical career arc. It produces a set of possibilities ranked by compatibility — not a single answer. For each possibility: what the work actually involves day to day; what the training pathway is and how long it takes; what it pays at entry and at five years; where in Kenya it is available; accounts from real people doing that work saying what they like and what is hard. Not marketing material. Honest. The system says explicitly: we are not certain about these suggestions. They are based on what people with similar interests and aptitudes have found fulfilling. You may try one and discover it is wrong for you. That is not failure — that is information. The system will update and suggest again.
Layer Three — National Programme Pathway Connection	NIAS connects directly to every pathway in the national programme — every corps, every industrial zone, every cooperative, every TVET programme, every university course, every entrepreneurship support pathway. A person who selects a pathway through NIAS is connected directly to the relevant application or enrolment process. There is no additional navigation required. For corps pathways specifically: NIAS generates a referral code that the relevant corps (KRC, KWCMC, KNAC, Settlement Maintenance

Layer	Design and Function
	Corps, KRCC, KSBC, Agricultural Corps, Digital Corps, Forest Corps, Cultural Corps, Sports Corps) uses to track applicants from identification to placement. The corps reports back to NIAS on placement outcomes — whether the match worked — feeding the system's continuous improvement. The Settlement Maintenance Corps is specifically designed for young people whose aptitudes are practical, place-based, and community-serving but who do not want or need a university trajectory. A 19-year-old in Kisumu who wants to work in their neighbourhood, do visible practical work, and receive a government salary and pension has a NIAS pathway to the Settlement Maintenance Academy. This is not a consolation pathway. It is a respected corps with a permanent role in every Kenyan city.
Layer Four — The Living System	NIAS is not a one-time assessment. It stays with the person through a persistent account linked to their national ID. When a KRCC apprentice completes their first year and the work is not what they expected, they return to the system. New preferences are recorded. New suggestions are generated. The pathway can change without stigma. At the aggregate level, NIAS generates national labour market intelligence: what the emerging workforce wants to do, where the mismatches are between aspiration and opportunity, where the programme needs to create new pathways because existing ones are oversubscribed. This intelligence feeds into the annual national labour market report published by the National Employment Service.

2.3 Access and Equity

NIAS is accessible to every Kenyan between 15 and 35 regardless of educational attainment, location, gender, or disability. It is available in Swahili and English. A version is available for users with low literacy — audio-guided, with visual prompts. A version is available for users with visual impairment. CRC programme officers are trained to support users through the system in person. The NIAS account is linked to a person's national biometric ID — it follows them, accumulates their history, and is theirs for life.

The system explicitly recruits into pathways that are currently gender-imbalanced. When a young woman's preferences match the profile of an excellent railway signalling technician or a KRCC project manager, the system recommends those pathways without filtering by gender. The presentation includes accounts from women already in those roles. This is the career guidance reform from Jinsia ya Taifa's Amendment Schedule made operational.

SECTION THREE

The Minimum Wage Architecture

3.1 The Current System and Its Failures

Kenya's current minimum wage system is a single national minimum updated irregularly by Cabinet decree, producing a wage floor that is systematically eroded by inflation between updates, that does not reflect the enormous variation in living costs between Nairobi and Turkana, and that is widely ignored in the informal economy because there is no enforcement mechanism with real reach. A domestic worker in Kisumu, a casual agricultural worker in Machakos, and a factory operative in Thika are all covered by the same nominal minimum wage that in practice protects none of them adequately.

Wage Tier	Application	Basis
National Floor	All employment in Kenya. No exemptions except the apprenticeship rate for the first 12 months of a registered apprenticeship.	Set annually by the National Wages Council. CPI-linked automatic uprating between Council reviews.
Urban Tier (Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Eldoret)	All employment in classified urban areas.	National Floor plus 35% cost-of-living supplement. Reviewed annually.
Industrial Minimum	Manufacturing, construction, mining, and processing sectors.	National Floor plus 25% sectoral supplement. Set by sector-specific tripartite wage agreement.
Agricultural Minimum	Formal agricultural employment including estate, cooperative, and large-scale commercial farming.	National Floor plus 15%. Seasonal worker rate: daily equivalent of monthly agricultural minimum with no deduction for accommodation provided by employer unless accommodation meets the habitability standard from Nyumba ya Taifa.
Domestic Worker Minimum	Household employment.	National Floor plus 20%. Written contract mandatory.

Wage Tier	Application	Basis
		Live-in accommodation does not reduce the cash component of the minimum wage by more than 15%.
Apprenticeship Rate	Registered KNQF apprentices in years 1–2 of training.	75% of the relevant sectoral minimum. Must increase to 100% from month 1 of year 3. Apprenticeship rate abuse — using 'apprenticeship' to pay below minimum indefinitely — is a criminal offence.

The National Wages Council is a tripartite body: government representatives from the Labour Directorate and Treasury; employer representatives from the Kenya Private Sector Alliance and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers; and trade union representatives from COTU-K and sector-specific unions. The Council meets annually. Its recommendations are binding unless the Cabinet provides written reasons for departure within 30 days of receipt. Reasons for departure are tabled in Parliament.

SECTION FOUR

The Formalisation Programme

4.1 Making Formality Easy

The formalisation programme inverts the current incentive structure. Every element is designed to make formal employment registration easier, cheaper, and more beneficial than informal employment — for both the employer and the worker.

Instrument	Specification
Single-day business and employer registration	A simplified online and in-person registration process that registers a business as an employer in one day at a cost of Ksh 500. The registration creates: a KRA employer PIN; an NSSF employer account; an NHIF employer account; and an entry in the National Employment Register. One form, one process, one day.
Single-page employment contract	A standard one-page employment contract in Swahili, published by the Labour Directorate, that satisfies all Employment Act requirements. It covers: parties, role,

Instrument	Specification
	start date, pay, hours, leave entitlement, notice period, and dispute resolution. An employer who uses the standard contract and pays at or above the relevant minimum wage is legally compliant. No lawyers required.
NSSF casual daily contribution	An NSSF contribution pathway for casual workers: Ksh 50 per working day, deducted from daily wages and matched by employer at Ksh 50. Accumulates in the worker's NSSF portable account. No monthly minimum. A worker who works 15 days in a month contributes for 15 days. This makes NSSF participation practical for the casual agricultural worker, the construction day labourer, and the market vendor's assistant.
PAYE formality incentive	Employers who bring workers into formal employment for the first time receive a two-year PAYE exemption on the newly formalised workers' earnings up to twice the national minimum wage. This removes the primary employer cost objection to formalisation for low-wage workers.
NHIF community contribution	An NHIF contribution pathway for informal workers: a flat monthly contribution of Ksh 500 providing standard NHIF coverage. Payable by mobile money. No employer required. A market trader, a smallholder farmer, or a jua kali artisan can self-enrol and be covered.
Procurement formalisation gate	All KRCC and KSBC contracts above Ksh 1 million, all national programme industrial zone licences, and all cooperative society government funding agreements require that all workers engaged for more than 30 consecutive days are formally registered with NSSF and NHIF. This gate applies to sub-contractors as well as primary contractors. Audited quarterly.

SECTION FIVE

The Social Protection System

5.1 NSSF Reform — From Fiction to Function

The National Social Security Fund in its current form is a contributory pension scheme that in practice provides benefits so low they are meaningless as retirement

income. A worker who contributed the maximum NSSF rate for 30 years receives a lump sum that is exhausted within months. This is not a pension system. It is a small savings scheme with government branding. The reform transforms it into a genuine defined contribution pension fund.

Reform Element	Specification
Contribution rate	Employee: 6% of gross earnings (from current Ksh 200 flat rate). Employer: 6% of gross earnings. Self-employed and informal: 12% of declared income or the casual daily rate described above. The rate produces a meaningful retirement income at a career contribution level.
Investment management	NSSF funds are managed by licensed independent fund managers selected through competitive procurement. NSSF does not manage its own investments. The board approves an investment policy; licensed managers execute it. Annual published returns. Independent trustee board with genuine pensioner representation.
Portability	The NSSF account is the worker's, not the employer's. It moves with the worker between employers, between formal and informal employment periods, and accumulates without interruption throughout a working life. This is the critical reform for a labour market where most workers change employers frequently.
Withdrawal rules	Retirement at 60: full access. Retirement at 55: 80% access. Death: full payment to nominated beneficiary within 30 days. Permanent disability: full access. Voluntary early withdrawal for housing deposit through the NHB diaspora homeownership pathway: up to 30% of accumulated balance once per lifetime after age 35.
Informal worker portable account	The NSSF casual daily contribution pathway described in Section Four creates a portable account that accumulates across multiple employers and informal work periods. A worker who has never had a formal employer can still accumulate a retirement balance through a lifetime of daily contributions.

5.2 Unemployment Insurance

Kenya has no unemployment insurance. When a formal sector worker loses their job through redundancy or business closure, the only safety net is family and savings. This forces risk-averse economic behaviour — workers stay in unsuitable jobs rather than risk unemployment, employers are reluctant to hire because they fear the cost of redundancy, and the economy's labour market flexibility is constrained.

The programme introduces a contributory unemployment insurance scheme administered by NSSF as a separate ring-fenced fund.

Element	Specification
Contribution	0.5% employee plus 0.5% employer on all formal sector earnings above the minimum wage. Accumulated in a ring-fenced Unemployment Insurance Fund separate from the pension fund.
Eligibility	Workers who have contributed for at least 12 consecutive months. Does not cover: voluntary resignation; dismissal for gross misconduct proven at the Labour Court; self-employed workers (separate scheme under development).
Benefit level	40% of the worker's average earnings in the 12 months prior to unemployment. Maximum benefit: 40% of the Urban Tier minimum wage. Duration: up to 6 months.
Conditions	Active job search participation, demonstrated monthly. Engagement with the National Employment Service — attending skills matching sessions, applying for referred positions. Participation in a retraining programme if one is available and appropriate.
Purpose	Not to fund indefinite non-employment. To fund the transition between jobs — the period when a worker is searching, retraining, or relocating. Six months is sufficient for this purpose in Kenya's growing labour market.

5.3 Workers' Compensation Reform

The current workers' compensation system is administered through the Work Injury Benefits Act, which in principle provides compensation for workplace injuries and occupational disease. In practice, claims take years to process, are frequently disputed on technical grounds, and the compensation amounts are inadequate. A construction worker who loses a hand on a KRCC site currently receives a nominal payment after a protracted legal process. This is not workers' compensation. It is a deterrent to claiming.

The reform: a mandatory workers' compensation insurance scheme, privately underwritten but with standardised coverage and claim settlement timelines enforced by EPRA's insurance regulatory function. Every employer above one worker must hold workers' compensation insurance. Premium is proportional to the risk profile of the work — construction and mining are higher premium than office work. Claims must be acknowledged within 5 days and settled within 90 days of

adequate documentation. Claims disputed by the insurer go to the Labour Court on an expedited track with a 60-day resolution target.

SECTION SIX

Occupational Health and Safety

6.1 The Real Scale of Workplace Harm

Kenya's construction industry kills several hundred workers per year through preventable accidents — falls, structural collapses, electrical contact, machinery incidents. The agriculture sector has significant pesticide poisoning, machinery injury, and musculoskeletal disease. The mining sector has dust disease, shaft safety failures, and chemical exposure. The informal economy has no OHS infrastructure at all. These deaths and injuries are not inevitable. They are the consequence of a system in which OHS inspection is negligible and the cost of non-compliance is near zero.

Reform Element	Specification
OHS Levy	An employer OHS levy of 0.25% of payroll for all employers above 10 workers. Revenue funds the expanded DOSHS inspection capacity — currently DOSHS has fewer than 300 inspectors for an economy of millions of workers. The levy funds a tenfold expansion over five years.
Safety Officer Mandate	All workplaces above 50 workers must employ a KNQF Level 5 Occupational Safety Officer as a full-time position. The OSO is responsible for the workplace safety plan, incident reporting, and the annual OHS audit. The OSO reports to the employer but has a protected right to report safety failures to DOSHS without employer consent.
Sectoral OHS Standards	Specific OHS standards for: construction (hard hat, harness, and high-visibility vest mandatory; scaffolding inspection before use; no work at height above 3m without safety system); mining (dust monitoring, shaft inspection, chemical exposure limits, hearing protection); agriculture (pesticide handling certification, machinery guard requirements); manufacturing (machine guarding, chemical storage, noise monitoring). Standards developed in tripartite process with unions and employer associations.

Reform Element	Specification
Corps-Specific Standards	Every national programme corps has a specific OHS addendum to its employment standard. KRCC road crew: rotating deployment model, injury compensation at 150% of daily wage for construction injuries. Kenya Railway Corps: shift work premium, dust and noise monitoring, career health monitoring for long-service track workers, tunnel and confined space protocol, remote ASAL deployment survival training through KDF joint programme. Kenya Water Construction and Maintenance Corps: working-at-height protocol for dam construction, confined space protocol for borehole work, ASAL extreme heat protocol, remote deployment allowance. Kenya National Ambulance Corps: post-traumatic stress monitoring mandatory, psychological support as a workplace right, infectious disease exposure protocol, air operations safety standard. Settlement Maintenance Corps: traffic management certification for road-side maintenance workers, mechanical equipment operation certification (sweeper trucks, hoover trucks), confined space protocol for sewer maintenance, chemical handling for cleaning operations. Agricultural Corps: pesticide handling certification for all extension officers who recommend chemical inputs.

SECTION SEVEN

The National Employment Service

7.1 From Authority to Active Service

The National Employment Authority currently exists as a statutory body but functions as a passive job advertising service used primarily by large formal sector employers. It does not reach the majority of job seekers, does not interact with the informal economy, and does not manage any active labour market programmes. The reform transforms it into the National Employment Service — an active, nationally networked employment service that manages the NIAS matching system, the graduate employment scheme, the workforce transition programme, and the active job search support that is a condition of unemployment insurance receipt.

NES Function	Specification
National jobs register	A live database of all formal sector vacancies above the minimum wage, accessible to all Kenyans through phone,

NES Function	Specification
	CRC digital terminal, and NES offices. Employers above 50 workers are required to post vacancies on the NES register before recruiting externally.
NIAS management	NES administers the NIAS system, manages its data, and coordinates the corps pathway referral process. Corps workforce planning data feeds into NIAS to ensure that suggestions reflect real available positions.
Graduate employment scheme	A one-year subsidised first-employment programme for university graduates and KNQF Level 5 and 6 TVET completers. The state co-funds 40% of the salary for the first year of formal employment for graduates who have been unemployed for more than 3 months post-qualification. Maximum subsidy: 40% of the urban tier minimum wage. The employer pays the remaining 60% and the full salary from year two.
Unemployment insurance case management	Workers receiving unemployment insurance are assigned an NES case manager. The case manager conducts monthly active job search reviews, refers relevant vacancies, and refers workers to retraining programmes where a skills gap is identified. Case management is the mechanism that makes unemployment insurance a transition support rather than a passive payment.
Labour market intelligence	NES publishes an Annual National Labour Market Report: demand by sector and county, average wages by occupation and region, NIAS matching outcome data, graduate employment rates by institution and discipline, workforce transition programme outcomes. This is the primary evidence base for skills planning across the education and training system.

SECTION EIGHT

Workforce Transitions — Managing the Programme's Own Displacements

8.1 The Programme Creates Transitions

The national programme is the single largest source of labour market disruption in Kenya's near-term future — not because it destroys jobs but because it creates them in new places and new forms while the old patterns change around it. SGR

construction employs thousands; when the line is complete those workers need somewhere to go. The Galana-Kulalu irrigation scheme mechanises progressively; the labour displaced by mechanisation needs productive alternatives. The mining programme creates mine towns; when the mine's operational life ends the town needs an economic future. Each of these is a workforce transition, and each of them must be designed rather than discovered.

Transition Type	Programme Response
Infrastructure construction completion	Every KRCC and KSBC capital project above Ksh 5 billion includes a Workforce Transition Plan as part of its investment case. The plan specifies: peak workforce size; the next project in the pipeline that can absorb the workforce; the NES engagement plan for workers who do not transfer to the next project; and the retraining options for workers whose skills profile does not match the next project's requirements. The 1% workforce transition levy on the project budget funds the NES engagement and retraining.
Agricultural mechanisation	As Shamba la Taifa's irrigation and cooperative programmes mechanise agricultural production, the displaced seasonal labour force is the primary beneficiary of the NIAS system's agricultural-to-industrial pathway. Workers whose seasonal agricultural employment is reduced are the priority cohort for KSBC construction apprenticeships, KRCC road crew positions, and agro-processing operative roles in the industrial zones near their communities.
Mine closure	Every mining licence issued under the national programme requires a Mine Closure Plan filed with the Mining Inspectorate and the Labour Directorate. The plan specifies: the projected mine life; the year-by-year workforce reduction schedule as the mine approaches closure; the NES engagement programme for affected workers beginning 5 years before projected closure; and the economic diversification programme for the mine town funded from the royalty-linked housing endowment.
Industrial technology displacement	As Kenyan industry modernises, some job categories will be automated or restructured. The programme does not resist technological change — that would be economically self-defeating. It manages the human transition: mandatory 6-month notice of significant workforce restructuring for all employers above 200 workers; NES engagement from the point of notice; retraining funding through the workforce transition levy; and the unemployment insurance bridge for workers who

Transition Type	Programme Response
	cannot immediately be placed.

SECTION NINE

Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining

9.1 The Framework

The programme does not design the trade union movement — that would be inappropriate. It designs the framework within which unions operate, which currently has significant gaps that allow employer interference with union formation and collective bargaining that would be illegal in any country with functioning labour law.

Element	Specification
Right to organise	The right to form and join a trade union is protected under the Constitution and the Employment Act. The gap in the current framework is enforcement: employers who dismiss workers for union activity, who refuse to recognise unions that have recruited a majority of workers, and who interfere with union elections face nominal penalties that do not deter the behaviour. The reform: interference with union formation or activity is a criminal offence carrying a fine of up to Ksh 5 million and a compensation order for all affected workers. DOSHS inspectors are trained to identify and report union interference as part of their inspection mandate.
Sectoral bargaining	Industry-level collective bargaining agreements are introduced for sectors where enterprise-level bargaining produces fragmented and unenforceable outcomes: construction, agriculture, hospitality, domestic work. A sectoral agreement negotiated between the relevant employer association and the relevant union sets minimum standards for the entire sector — above the statutory minimum wage — and binds all employers in the sector regardless of whether they individually participated in negotiations.
Corps collective bargaining	Every national programme corps has a recognised staff association with collective bargaining rights. The corps staff association negotiates directly with the relevant directorate on pay scales, working conditions, OHS

Element	Specification
	standards, and career progression. The National Wages Council mediates disputes.
National Wages Council	The tripartite body described in Section Three is also the forum for reviewing collective bargaining disputes that cannot be resolved bilaterally and for setting the framework within which sectoral agreements operate. Its annual report to Parliament includes a state of industrial relations section that is a public accountability mechanism for both employers and unions.

SECTION TEN

Child Labour, Domestic Workers and Forced Labour

[FORTHCOMING] — Full legislative detail for the Child Labour Elimination Programme, the Domestic Worker Charter, and the Forced Labour and Trafficking prosecution framework. The architecture below represents the programme's commitments pending detailed drafting.

The child labour elimination programme operates through three mechanisms: attendance enforcement linked to the school capitation grant (persistent absence triggers community health worker visits); agricultural employer child labour audit as a condition of export certification under the agriculture programme; and prohibition of children under 14 from any employment with criminal liability for employers and for parents who facilitate employment of children under 14 in hazardous work.

The Domestic Worker Charter establishes: a written contract mandatory for all domestic employment above 8 hours per week; minimum wage at the domestic worker rate; one day off per week; maximum 10-hour working day; the employer's obligation to register the domestic worker with NSSF and NHIF; and a prohibition on withholding identity documents. Domestic workers are entitled to organise and bargain collectively. The Domestic Workers Union is recognised as a legitimate trade union under the Labour Relations Act.

Forced labour and trafficking prosecutions are integrated with the Justice programme (Haki ya Taifa) through a dedicated Labour Trafficking prosecution unit within the DPP's office, with NES case officers trained to identify and refer suspected forced labour cases encountered through their employment service work.

SECTION ELEVEN

The Cross-Programme Amendment Schedule

[FORTHCOMING] — Full Amendment Reference Codes for all programme documents — detailed labour obligations for each corps, each industrial programme, and each social protection integration point. The following represents the summary framework.

Every programme document is amended to include the following standard labour obligations under Amendment Reference Code KAZ/[DOCUMENT]/[NUMBER]: all workers engaged for more than 30 consecutive days in any national programme activity are formally registered; the relevant corps employment standard applies to all corps-pathway workers; the applicable sectoral minimum wage applies to all workers; the OHS standard for the relevant sector applies to all sites; the gender pay audit obligation from Jinsia ya Taifa applies to all employers above 100 workers; and the workforce transition levy of 1% applies to all capital projects above Ksh 10 billion.

Specific corps amendments: KRCC employment standard includes rotating deployment model, injury compensation at 150% of daily wage, and the NIAS referral pathway for end-of-project transition. Railway Corps employment standard includes shift premium, health monitoring, and enhanced pension. Ambulance Corps employment standard includes post-traumatic stress monitoring as a mandatory employment condition. Agricultural Corps employment standard includes pesticide certification, extension vehicle allowance, and the rural deployment supplement.

SECTION TWELVE

The Twenty-Year Trajectory

Phase	Targets
Years 1–3: Foundations	NIAS operational in all CRCs and secondary schools. National Employment Service transformed and active. Single-day employer registration live. NSSF reform enacted and new contribution rates in effect. Unemployment insurance fund established. All corps employment standards published and operative. Minimum wage regional and sectoral structure in force. National Wages Council constituted.

Phase	Targets
Years 3–7: Scale	NIAS: 2 million young people have completed at least one preference session. Corps pathways: 100,000 workers placed through NIAS referral. Informal employment rate: 75% (from 80% baseline). Unemployment insurance: 500,000 active contributors. Workers' compensation: 90-day claim settlement rate above 80%. DOSHS inspections: tenfold increase on baseline.
Years 7–12: Structural Change	Informal employment rate: 68%. Social Protection Floor: healthcare access through NHIF for 70% of population. Graduate employment scheme: 80% of participants in sustained employment at 12 months. Workforce transition programme: 95% of KRCC project-completion workers placed in next assignment or new role within 6 months. Sectoral bargaining agreements: construction, agriculture, hospitality, and domestic work all covered.
Years 12–20: Maturity and Floor	Informal employment rate: 55% (target 50% by Year 20). Social Protection Floor: 80% of population covered across all floor components. NSSF: average pension replaces 30% of pre-retirement income for full-career contributors. Unemployment insurance: universal coverage for formal sector. Child labour: below 5% incidence in all sectors. NIAS: 5 million Kenyans have used the system and 60% report that their current work matches or exceeds their NIAS suggestions.

KAZI YA TAIFA — The National Labour and Social Protection Vision. *WORKING DOCUMENT — Year One.*

This document forms part of the Kenya National Development Programme. Cross-programme labour obligations are embedded in every sector document through the Amendment Schedule in Section Eleven. The Social Protection Floor it establishes connects to Afya ya Taifa (health), Nyumba ya Taifa (housing), Shamba la Taifa (agriculture), Viwanda ya Taifa (industry), Utamaduni wa Taifa (culture and sports), and all corps employment frameworks across the programme.

PROGRAMME INTEGRATION APPENDIX

Kazi ya Taifa — Labour — Cross-Programme Integration, Employment Summary and Legal Register

A. Employment Summary

Institution / Role	Permanent	Entry-Level	Entry Qualification and Pathway
National Employment Service (NIAS + career counselling) staff	1,450	500	NIAS assessment officers (one per sub-county NIAS office), career counsellors — KNQF Level 5–6.
Unemployment Insurance administration staff	300	100	Claims processors, mobile money verification officers — KNQF Level 4–5.
OHS (Occupational Health and Safety) inspectors	500	200	Labour inspectors — KNQF Level 5–6. Entry: BSc Occupational Health or engineering.

Employment Summary	Figure
Total permanent positions (Year 10 steady state)	~2,250
Entry-level positions (KNQF Level 2–5)	~800
Reference — full programme employment register	Programme Integration Index (PII) Section Two

B. Cross-Programme Linkages

Every linkage below names the specific institution, data system, or instrument that creates the interface. Vague references are not listed — only confirmed operational connections.

Links To	Specific Linkage — Institution, Data System, or Instrument at the Interface
Jamii na Ustawi	NIAS is the activation engine for the social protection system. Every working-age adult below 60 receiving a transfer is enrolled in NIAS within 30 days of first payment. NIAS generates a personalised activation plan. The informal sector unemployment insurance extension (Kazi Tier 2 legislation) is also designed in Jamii — both documents must cross-reference the UI system as a shared institution.
Ulinzi na Usalama	Prison pre-release NES programme: NES engages with every prisoner 6 months before release. NES case manager assigned, NIAS assessment conducted, KNQF certificate preparation confirmed, employment pathway confirmed. This requires a formal Kazi-Ulinzi interface protocol that does not currently exist as a named linkage in either document.
Sayansi na Teknolojia	NIAS aptitude assessment algorithm is a digital product developed and maintained by KIDRI (KRA Institute 10 — ICT and digital research). NIAS is technically a Teknolojia-hosted system

	(on Wingu la Taifa) with Kazi as the programme owner. The NIAS algorithm is regularly updated by KIDRI based on programme performance data.
Shamba la Taifa	NIAS directs Form 4 completers and social protection recipients with agricultural aptitude toward KAERS extension training and ward cooperative membership pathways. Cooperative membership is an NIAS-recognised activation pathway that Kazi must formally recognise.
Elimu ya Kina	NIAS integration for Form 4 completers: every Form 4 completer is offered a NIAS assessment as a condition of the national examination certification process. This is a Kazi-Elimu interface that makes NIAS universal for secondary school leavers.
Mfumo wa Katiba	National Employment Service Act — Tier 1 Year 1 legislation. National Unemployment Insurance Act (informal sector extension) — Tier 2 Year 2. NSSF Act Amendment (informal sector mobile money contribution pathway) — Tier 2 Year 2.

C. Legal Instruments and Constitutional Protection

Legal Instrument	Year	Pathway
National Employment Service Act — NIAS statutory basis	Year 1	Simple majority
National Unemployment Insurance Act — informal sector extension via M-Pesa	Year 2	Simple majority
NSSF Act Amendment — informal sector contribution pathway	Year 2	Simple majority
Employment Act Amendment — OHS reform, workers' compensation update	Year 2	Simple majority

D. Live Metrics and Accountability

Full cross-reference detail: Programme Integration Index (PII) — Sections 1, 2, and 3.
Live metrics: NIAS Dashboard. Monthly: NIAS assessments conducted per county, corps pathway referrals completed (by corps), activation plan compliance rate (% of assessed social protection recipients with active plans), earnings disregard transitions (beneficiaries in 6-month cushioned exit from transfer). Annual: unemployment rate by county, informal sector UI contribution growth.